

**UNAPPROVED DRAFT**  
**VIRGINIA BOARD OF DENTISTRY**  
**MINUTES**  
**September 27, 2002**

The Virginia Board of Dentistry (Board) convened the Dental Workforce Task Force at 9:30 a.m. on September 27, 2002, at the Department of Health Professions in Richmond, Virginia. The Task Force is charged with making recommendations to the Board about the supply and distribution of dental practice personnel.

**PRESENT:** James D. Watkins, D.D.S., Chairman  
Deborah Southall, R.D.H.  
Tammy Cahoon, R.D.H.  
Becky Brown, C.D.A.  
Reed Boyd, D.D.S.  
Barry Griffin, D.D.S.  
James Revere, D.D.S.  
Ernie L. Wolfe, C.D.T.  
Janet L. Scharer, R.D.H.  
April Garrison, R.D.H.

**STAFF PRESENT:** Sandra K. Reen, Executive Director  
Sheila Lester-Mitchell, Administrative Assistant

**DISCUSSION:** Dr. Watkins opened the meeting with introductions and then advised that the work of the Task Force will be advisory to the Board. He then facilitated a discussion of the topics noted for discussion and the ideas for change received from various members. A predominant theme that emerged was that there is generally a lack of public awareness of the career opportunities for dental hygienists, dental assistants and dental laboratory technicians. It was noted that the applicant pools for the School of Dentistry and in the Dental Hygiene programs are very healthy. It was further noted that resources limit the capacity of these programs.

**Recommendations identified and discussed by the Task Force included:**

- ADAA mandatory education for dental assistants to ensure competency while treating the public. Public recognition of dental assistant education and professional competency.
- Value to the dental assistant for the office/TEAM/Profession. Competent dental assistants demonstrating aseptic protocols.

- Set standards/competencies for the dental assistant professional.
- Require all graduates to enter residency programs after dental school.
- Increase the number of dental hygienists that enter the work force.
- Establish a dental hygiene technician program to help with the shortage of hygienists.
- Change the regulations to allow duly educated and licensed dental hygienists to administer local anesthesia to patients.
- Permit dental hygienists to use slow speed hand pieces to adjust sealants and finish amalgams with finishing burs and stones.
- Minimal competency standards and required infection control training for dental technicians.
- Improve public awareness of the shortage of trained dental technicians so that more individuals would enter the field of dental laboratory technology.
- Establish a dental hygiene technician program that would allow for professional development/advancement of experienced dental assistants. The program should allow the dentist to provide training in his office.
- Change the statutes and regulations to allow dental hygienists to administer local anesthesia as is permitted in other states.
- Achieve authority to grant specialty licenses.
- Allow private practices to serve as training sites for dental students.
- Encourage dentists to let patients know about the contributions made to their treatment by the auxiliary personnel.
- Credential dental hygienists to train dental assistants

**Actions that are being implemented were reported:**

- VCU/MCV School of Dentistry is making efforts to recruit students from the non-metro areas of the Commonwealth
- Participating in high school career awareness days

**Information to be collected in preparation for the next meeting was identified:**

- Ms. Sharer agreed to provide data on the graduation rates of dental hygiene programs and on the California practice of recognizing two levels of dental assistants.

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- Dr. Watkins agreed to provide information on the 2020 study and the AADE composites.
- Dr. Boyd agreed to provide information from the VDA regarding auxiliary education and the availability of dental hygienists.

**ADJOURNMENT:**

Dr. Watkins concluded the meeting by advising that the next meeting will be held on November 15, 2002. The meeting was adjourned at 2:15 p.m. with no action being taken.

**APPROVED:**

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James D. Watkins, DDS, Chairman  
Dental Workforce Task Force

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Date

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Sandra K. Reen, Executive Director  
Virginia Board of Dentistry

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Date